



## ● **New Fee Schedule Effective Date**

Effective June 29, 2001, the fees for electrical inspections were increased by 2.87 %. The new fee schedule is currently on-line at our web site ([www.lni.wa.gov/scs/electrical](http://www.lni.wa.gov/scs/electrical)). The new fee schedule covers all electrical inspection activities and the fees for electrical licensing and certification.

## ● **Contractors/Electricians Take Notice: Citations, final penalties and inspection fees.**

Recently, the department enhanced the electrical database to provide quicker more efficient licensing/certificate processing. As part of this upgrade, the electrical database links all "finalized" citations, inspection, and other fees owed the department to the electrical contractor's license, administrator, or electrician record. Under RCW 19.28, the department has the authority to deny an application or renewal if outstanding fees are owed to the department. Applications or renewals will be denied until all fees and administrative cost are paid.

WAC 296-46A-931/950 and WAC 296-401B-130 allow the department to deny renewal of contractor's licenses, administrator and/or electrician certificates. WAC 296-401B-850 also allows the department to revoke or suspend electrician or trainee certificates for any violation of RCW 19.28.

WAC 296-46A-960 allows the department to revoke or suspend an electrical contractor's license or administrator's certificate when there are serious acts of noncompliance. The department considers the failure to finalize citations and properly complete the purchase of electrical work permits serious. If an electrical contractor or administrator fails to complete their obligation related to fees due they may also be issued citation(s) per WAC 296-46A-920.

The department does not wish to have any contractor or individual lose their license/certificate or be denied the ability to renew their licenses/certificates. All unpaid fees are also sent to our collection department. To avoid such actions, please ensure that all fees due the department are paid in full.

## ● **Variance Request**

A variance request is used to allow a deviation from specific requirements of the National Electrical Code (NEC) or the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). The request must provide an alternate installation method providing an equivalent measure of safety as required by the NEC, NESC or WAC.

A variance will not be granted if the proposed installation will reduce the overall safety requirements. When variances are granted, they are site and time specific for that particular installation and cannot be applied to future projects.

## ● **Revised 15 Foot WAC Rule for Feeders and Service Disconnects**

NEC 225-32 and NEC 230-70(a) require the disconnecting means to be located nearest the point of entrance to a building or structure. The revised WAC 296-46A-22530 and WAC 296-465A-23040 (5)(a) allow these disconnect to be located within 15 feet of the building or structure. Variances to the 15-foot rule will not be considered without documentation to support the application.

## ● **Multi-Point Grounding of High Voltage Systems**

Utilities are turning over utility installed medium/high voltage systems to customers. General electrical contractors are also installing medium/high voltage systems as new installations. The future maintenance and revision of these systems becomes the responsibility of the owner. Using the National Electric Code (NEC) and/or National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), the department or city electrical inspection department is responsible for all inspections for installations not under the control of the utility.

NEC 250-142(b) requires “...A grounded circuit conductor shall not be used for grounding noncurrent-carrying metal parts of equipment on the load side of the service disconnecting means.” NEC 250-184(b) allows multi-point grounding of the grounded conductor for systems over 1kv only in specific instances (i.e. “The neutral of a solidly ground neutral system shall be permitted to be grounded at more than one point for the following: (1) Services, (2) Direct-buried portions of feeders employing a bare copper neutral, (3) Overhead portions installed outdoor.”).

When customer owned existing medium/high voltage systems, installed to utility standards are altered or extended, these systems will be required to be upgraded to meet NEC and WAC requirements. Where the existing medium/high voltage system is not altered or changed in any manner, the existing system will be allowed to remain, unless the system is considered to be unsafe, then it will be required to be replaced with a code compliant installation.

### ● **Ground Rod Length**

Electrical Inspectors are finding six-foot and shorter ground rods installed as grounding electrodes. NEC 250-52(c) says, “Rod and pipe electrodes shall not be less than 8 ft (2.44 m) in length. The electrode must be installed such that at least 8 ft (2.44m) of length is in contact with the soil by being driven to a depth of 8 ft...except where rock bottom is encountered, then the electrode shall be driven at an oblique angle not to exceed 45 degrees from the vertical or buried in a trench at least 2 ½ ft deep.”

The use of short ground rods is considered a flagrant and gross code violation, and the installer will be subject to citations as outlined in WAC 296-46A-920(C) & (D)(12).

### ● **Electrical Plan Review Worksheet**

Every project that goes through the formal electrical plan review process has a plan review worksheet created. The worksheet is attached to the front of the approved drawings; a copy is sent with the billing statement to the submitter and a copy is sent to the electrical field supervisor for use by the field inspector. The worksheet has the electrical distribution system outlined item by item. Each line contains equipment sizes, overcurrent devices sizes, conductor sizes, loads in both kva and amps, and the permit fee for that line item. The worksheet along with the plan review notes that are in or outlined in RED on the drawing **must be followed during installation and inspection of the project.** If the field inspector discovers field alternations made to the approved design (e.g. changes to loads, distribution systems, etc), the plans must be resubmitted to the electrical plan review section for approval. It is strongly suggested that this resubmittal not take place at the time of the final electrical inspection, as the review process will hold up final inspection approval.

### ● **Code Question of the Month**

**This month's Code Question:** What is the MAXIMUM combined load of two (2) 240-volt fixed-space heaters on a 30 amp branch circuit? Answer: (1) 3,600va, (2) 5,760va, (3) 7,200va, (4) 9,000va.

**Last month's Code Question:** The definition of a “Qualified Person,” according to NEC-Article 100 is: (A) someone who is familiar with the construction and hazards involved.